

How to Type on the Braille Plus When You Don't Know Braille

The Braille Plus has a Telephone Keypad that can be used for writing as opposed to using the Braille keys. That's right, old school texting returns. Using the Keypad allows parents, teachers, and 1:1 assistants the ability to assist students when creating, saving, or locating files on the Braille Plus.

The Braille Plus Keypad has 3 different modes:

1. Number mode announced numeric
2. Braille mode announced thumb braille
3. ABC mode aka old school texting

To change mode on the Keypad hold down # and press the program 2 button. Continue hold down # and tapping the program 2 button until you hear the mode you want.

Typically the keypad mode changes on its own based on the application. For instance while entering a phone number into your address book the keypad for that field will be in number mode. When entering an email the application would expect letters thus the keypad mode would be ABC mode.

Personally I find the number mode most useful for use with the calender, date and time settings, as well as address book. The number mode keeps you from guessing which Braille format you need to apply when entering numbers or punctuation. There is no need to question whether to use literary Braille numbers or Nemeth numbers. Additionally the Keypad works great for punctuation as you don't have to guess whether to use literary Braille or ASCII Braille.

I'm sure you've heard the Braille Plus speak keyboard commands while using the Applications Menu or scrolling through a list. While using the Word processor you will hear the Braille Plus announce 1 save file ctrl + S. Pressing 1 at that point is certainly easier however using a key command such as ctrl +N to open a new file would be faster than pressing: Menu, 7 for file, and 3 for new document (that is if you knew the number key shortcuts as opposed to using the down arrow key to auditorally scan though the options menu).

To utilize the keyboard shortcuts using the keypad use the modifier keys.

- * = shift
- 0 = ctrl key
- # = alt

If you think about the normal QWERTY keyboard commands such as move by word (ctrl + L/R >) then you already know several commands as the Braille Plus recognizes the same commands.

Use 0 + L/R > or ctrl + L/R > on the Braille display to perform the same task.

Type Letters

ABC mode lets you type letters by assigning a few letters to each number on the phone keypad. When typing text, you press the key with the desired letter once, for the first letter, twice for the second letter, and so on. Pressing the key a fourth time will allow you to use the number (with some exceptions such as S and Z). After the fourth time the letters associated with the key will announce in a higher pitch to indicate a capital letter.

1 contains . @ ? _ (most common punctuation)

2 contains a, b, and c.

3 contains d, e, and f

4 contains g, h, and i

5 contains j, k, and l

6 contains m, n, and o

7 contains p, q, r, and s.

8 contains t, u, and v,

9 contains w, x, y, and z.

0 = space, 0, +

* = Backspace

activates the punctuation grid

When you press Pound while typing, the unit presents a grid of punctuation characters from which you use the arrows to select. When you find the punctuation character to add to your text, press Select to copy the current character into the text and close the grid so you may continue typing. If you change your mind and do not wish to type a punctuation character, press Cancel to close the punctuation grid.